

II. *Description of a new Species of Lithocolletis.* By
JOHN SCOTT, Esq.

[Read 3rd October, 1853.]

Lithocolletis irradiella. (Pl. I. fig. 1.)

At first sight this insect much resembles *L. lautella*, but is easily distinguished from it by its darker anterior wings, the streaks being more slender, and the spot at the anal angle not being on the inner margin.

Expansion of the wings 4 lines.

Tuft of the head black, face and palpi shining, silvery; antennæ darkish, with a broad white ring near the tip, which last is black; thorax blackish; abdomen blackish, beneath white; the four anterior legs have the femora and tibiæ white; the posterior legs have the femora black, tibiæ white; tarsi of all the legs white, except the basal joint of each, which is black above, throughout nearly its whole length.

Anterior wings olivaceous-brown, with three silvery white streaks along the costa, nearly equidistant from each other, and two on the inner margin. The first costal streak is placed considerably before the middle of the wing, it nearly reaches the fold (rather obliquely) and points towards the anal angle of the wing; the second costal streak is situated rather more than halfway between the first and third, somewhat crescent-shaped, broadest at its base, and also terminates a little short of the fold; the third costal streak is nearly uniform in thickness throughout, and is much more curved than the preceding. The first inner marginal streak lies a little in front of the first costal one, the exterior point of the base of the latter being nearly in a line with the interior point of the base of the former, its apex terminating a little beyond the fold of the wing, and beyond the apex of the first costal streak, which it almost touches; the second inner marginal streak lies opposite the end of the second costal streak, and forms with it an interrupted fascia, not touching the inner margin, and beyond the apex of the third costal streak, to which it points, is a minute, nearly round, silvery-white spot. The basal streak, also silvery-white, is narrow and short, and is rather nearer the costa than the inner margin, and there is a small oblong spot on the inner margin

near the base. The tips of the anterior wings in some lights steel blue. Dark margins enclose all these white markings. The apical black spot is almost concealed in the deep ground colour of the wings. Posterior wings purplish, cilia the same.

Taken in the beginning of July, near Renfrew, amongst birches in a damp part of a wood.

III. *Critical Remarks upon the British Elateridæ, with Descriptions of some of the Species.* By JOHN CURTIS, F.L.S., &c.

[Read 6th February, 1854.]

WHAT is the *Elater aterrimus* of Linnæus? This simple question has led to numerous discussions, and before the genus *Elater* was published in the "British Entomology," I spared no pains to arrive at the truth, which one would think was easy enough from our possessing the collections of Linnæus: such, however, is not the case, and, as I have frequently stated, unless the specimens in the Linnæan cabinet agree perfectly with the descriptions in the "Fauna Suecica" or the "Systema Naturæ," the authority is worthless. It is not to be supposed that the collection is as the elder Linnæus left it; for, owing to the natural casualties attending such fragile and perishable objects as insects, when neglected, and the various hands the property has gone through during the greater part of a century, it could not be expected to remain intact: moreover, at that early stage of natural science, it cannot be controverted that species quite distinct were included in cabinets under the same name, and Linnæus, no doubt, during his lifetime, left a great deal to be filled up by his pupils and friends. Indeed, as far as nomenclature goes, no collection that I have seen, of half the standing of Linnæus's, has been worth much to identify species; and this misfortune has been daily increasing from the egregious folly which has been so prevalent of multiplying species, and, under the most frivolous pretext, of superseding old and well-established names.

This is so important a subject, that I must be permitted to guard the rising generation of Entomologists against being misled by what is termed high authorities—indeed, not to put implicit